

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, June 3. 1712.

IT is not so much a Wonder to me, that Things have been now brought near to a Conclusion ; as it has been a Wonder to me they did not come to a Conclusion sooner ; we seem to tell one another there is a Peace making with *France* ; whether between *Great Britain* and *France* Separately, or not, I believe remains also no doubt.

That there is a Peace made Exclusively of our Allies, I will never believe, till the matter of Fact appears ; That there may be a Peace made for *Britain* and Her Allies also, if they please to

come in, I believe may appear ; Time will discover these Things more evidently ; mean time, what say our Contending Parties ? I'll give you their Words as Impartially as is possible, and then I'll tell you honestly what I say myself.

One Party says, we have clapt up a Private, Separate, Unfair Peace, have forsaken and abandon'd our Allies, have broken the Confederacy, and all the Leagues, Treaties, and Alliances made for Defence of the Liberties of Europe, and the Protestant Religion ; That we have been Debauch'd by Jacobite Principles,

ciples, are fallen into French Measures, and that the Design is to carry Things on, to the Introduction of Popery and the Pretender.

The other say, That the Queen has been Abused, that Her Majesty, willing to put an End to the Effusion of Blood, and to quench the Flames of War, hearkened to the French Proposals for a Treaty, and brought the Confederates to meet by their Plenipotentiaries; but that the said Confederates, far from applying themselves seriously to the great Subject for which they met, *viz.* to heal the Wounds of the Nations, and make up the greatest Breach that ever was yet made in the World, turn'd all their Wits and Policy to frustrate, and render fruitless, the Good Designs of Her Majesty: That the Plenipotentiaries, instead of Negotiating, fell to Intrigueing, and join'd together to insult the Plenipotentiaries of France, and to Banter those of Britain; rejecting all Conferences in order to a Peace, and prescribing them to Answer in Writing, in order to spin out the Treaty in length, that the War might intervene; That all the Remonstrances of her Majesty and her Minister's, and all her Majesty's Demands for making good the Just Proportions of the War, have been answer'd with trifling or Mocking, and that it has been evident, the Confederates have resolved to make no Peace, but to force her Majesty, on pretence of the Grand Alliance, to carry on the War to what length they please.

That Her Majesty, Understanding the true Intent and Meaning of the Grand Alliance to be, That the War should be carried on, till a Good Peace may be obtain'd; and knowing now, that the King of France is willing to Consent to such Terms as contain a Good Peace; and her Majesty having, in vain, attempted it, and finding her good Intentions rejected in a very disobligeing manner, thinks she has good Cause to declare herself disengag'd from any farther Obligation for the pursuit of the War, that she is now to secure the Peace and Welfare of her own Dominions in the best manner she can; and tho' she be willing to obtain the best Conditions possible, for such of the Allies as please to accept the same, yet if they think fit to stand out any longer, she shall think herself unconcern'd in it, having us'd her Utmost to bring them all to an Honourable Agreement.

I think I have summ'd up the Affair with Impartiality; I repeat it again as above; this is what both Sides respectively say of the present Affair, not what I say myself.

As to what I say myself, it is in short, and with a Heart full of Concern and Anxiety for the Fate of Europe, which bodes much Trouble; That if any one of these Things of either Side is true, it is very bad, and we that are in low and neutral Stations, as to action, may bless God we have no Hand in it one Way or other.

I shall be larger on this on my next.

MISCELLANEA.

Among the many clashing Contradic^tting Circumstances of this Age, and *sure* no Age ever abounded with more, one falls so directly in my Way, as it relates to Trade, that I cannot forbear mentioning it in this manner.

We have a great variety of Notions fluttering in the Heads of our People, about the *Dutch*, and about how we are, or are not Concern'd to maintain our Correspondence or Oneness of Interest with them, either in this War or after a Peace; and I shall not stick with great Freedom to give my Thoughts both Way's in its Turn — But for the present, I must observe that we have a sort of People among us, who are every Day *damning* and *un-damning* the *Dutch*, in Matters of Politicks, and yet at the same time are for giving us up, bound Hand and Foot to the *Dutch* in Matters of Trade, and this they do with the greatest Satisfaction imaginable.

For my part, I am clear in this, that it is our Undisputed Interest to maintain a constant, steady Union with the *Dutch*, and the Civil Interest of the two Nations, are, as *Europe* is now stated, Inseparable; for which Reason, tho' at present there seems to be Dissatisfaction, I hope they may be prevented from breaking out into any thing fatal to the Peace between them.

But tho' I am for fixing and Consolidating the Interest of the two Nations, as far as may be, together, in Matters of State and Government, yet I am for keeping up the Separate Interest of Trade to the height; many Things I would yield to the *Dutch* relating to

Quota's, Deficiencies, Proportions, and the like; but not an Inch in Trade.

Trade is the Life of both Nations, and they live Separately, however they may act Jointly; if there be a Burthen to be born, we may set our Shoulders to it together; if an Enemy to be kept our, Resist him together; if Navigation be Interrupted, scour the Seas together; this is to help and support one another, and mutual Defence, cultivates mutual Affection; nor can any Man that knows and values the true Interest of *Britain*, or of the Protestant Religion, desire to make a Breach between the *Dutch* and Us: But in Matters of Trade, the Case is quite otherwise; Matters of Safety Concern them together, but Trade is the Nourishment of the Body: Two Friends may Unite Interests, and Hopes, and Act in joint pursuit of Happiness, with an Inseparable Concern for, and application to the Good of one another; but they cannot Eat and Drink for one another, their Food must Nourish them apart, and tho' they will Communicate their Cares and Enjoyments, their Hopes and fears, their Griefs and Joys, yet they cannot Communicate their Blood and Spirits; thus were our Confederacy and Oneness of Interest with the *Dutch*, ten fold firmer than it is, and if that be possible, may it be so; yet we need not put our Trade into their Hands, nay, we must not, we cannot, without laying a Foundation for the Ruin of that Friendship, in Ruining that which qualifies us to be their Friends.

To give them help, to act in Conjunction, to League with them Offensively

sively and Defensively, against all the World ; this I am for without reserve, except for Property and Right ; but to give them our Trade, this is Communicating Blood and Spirits ; this is killing ourselves to keep them alive, starving our Poor to feed their Poor ; this I can by no means agree to be wisely or rightly done, and therefore it is that I blame those People, who, for what End I know not, yet are always rejoicing when they see such Taxes laid, as will help to transpose our Trade into the Hands of the Dutch : I shall Enumerate a few Articles, in which this has been evident, some of which are now depending ; and for that Reason, I speak that our Representatives may see wherein the clogging of Trade too much, may help the Dutch and hurt ourselves ; and this I do now, because it is not too late to help it, the Beauty of all Animadversion lying in the Seasonableness of it.

The Case of the African Company is one of these, in which it is evident, that

whatever Disadvantages either the Company may suffer, or the Trade, by their Discouragement, is so much Advantage given to the Dutch, and in which Trade, the Dutch have made prodigious Increase, by the Division which has depended so long, and by the Languishing Circumstances of the Company ; but of this I have said so much I need not repeat.

Another Case relates to the Trade to India, and the heavy Taxes now laying on Coffee, Tea, Drugs, &c. which being Tax'd before to so great a height, as 30 or 40 per Cent, and 15 to 20 per Cent. more being now to be laid on, if the Companies or Importers are discouraged from carrying on that Trade, it falls gradually and of course, into the Hands of the Dutch — This is building up the Dutch upon the Ruin of Britain, and taking the Blood out of our Veins, to make it Circulate through theirs : I shall descend to more Particulars hereafter.

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